

Welcome to the Legislative Update for May 28, 2011

This "between sessions" *version* of our regular e-mail is provided as a courtesy of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging. The purpose of this service is to keep Arizona's seniors and advocates for aging services informed about bills and actions taking place at the Arizona State Legislature and to highlight Congressional bills or happenings affecting older Americans. The information is intended to help you shape your own opinion about an issue and to give you the necessary resources and contacts so that you can ensure your perspective and voice are heard. The *Legislative Update* is non-partisan in nature. Thank you for your interest! The *Legislative Update* is currently offered monthly.

Fiscal Updates:

From the **Joint Legislative Budget Committee** (JLBC)

The JLBC May 2011 ***Monthly Fiscal Highlights*** reports "April was the ninth consecutive month of year-over-year growth in base General Fund revenue collections." To review economic indicators, summary of recent agency reports, and April spending, go to: <http://www.azleg.gov/jlbc/mfh-may-11.pdf>.

The most recent update to the JLBC report, *Tracking Arizona's Recovery* is provided at: <http://www.azleg.gov/jlbc/TrackingAZRecovery.pdf>

Legislative Wrap-Up:

You can review *all the bills* tracked this session. See the information provided at the **SHORT & FULL** List links below.

Please be advised that the presence of a bill on the Council's tracking lists does not represent support or opposition by the Council to that bill. It *does* mean the bill may be of interest to older Arizonans and advocates of aging services.

SHORT LIST: those bills having to do with health and safety of older adults.

<http://www.azcapitolreports.com/webreport.cfm?webreport=24673&listid=44407&print=true>

Our intern, Jena, provided highlights of legislation on the Council's SHORT List that was signed to the Council's Legislative and Policy Coordinating Committee in May. A link to that overview is provided here:

<http://www.azgovernor.gov/gaca/Newsletter/FinalLegUpdate.PDF>

FULL LIST:

<http://www.azcapitolreports.com/webreport.cfm?webreport=24635&listid=43827&print=true>

Information about the bills as presented on the Council's tracking list is part of a purchased service provided by the *Arizona Capitol Times*.

Share your thoughts! If you have a particular perspective to share with the Governor or your legislators, you may voice your thoughts at any time by contacting the:

Governor's Office of Constituent Services at 602-542-1318 or toll-free at 1-800-253-0883 or you may **contact the legislator from your area**.

You can locate your legislator by going to the **Arizona State Legislature website** <http://www.azleg.gov/> and looking for: *How do I find My Legislators* or by following the instructions provided at both the **Senate** and **House Member** links at the website.

FEDERAL OVERVIEW:

H.R. 1897

Alzheimer's Breakthrough Act of 2011

Introduced on May 13, 2011 by Representative Christopher H. Smith (NJ-4), the bill has 13 cosponsors.

The intent of the legislation is to amend the Public Health Service Act to require a Federal commitment to Alzheimer's disease research to advance breakthrough treatments for people living with Alzheimer's disease

On May 13, H.R. 1897 was referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

H.R. 1479

Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act 2011

Introduced on April 12, 2011 by Representative Tom Latham (IA-4); the bill has 43 co-sponsors.

Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act 2011 - Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow a nonrefundable income tax credit of up to \$500 for the purchase of a qualified hearing aid for an individual who is either: (1) age 55 or older; or (2) is claimed as a dependent of the taxpayer. Denies such tax credit to any taxpayer whose modified adjusted gross income exceeds \$200,000.

On April 12, H.R. 1479 was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. Related legislation includes Senate Bill 905.

H.R. 1606

Special Care Dentistry Act of 2011

Introduced on April 15, 2011 by Representative Eliot L. Engel (NY-17), the bill includes the finding of the United States Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health in America and amends title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide oral health services to aged, blind, or disabled individuals under the Medicaid Program, and for other purposes.

On April 25, 2011, the bill was referred to the House Subcommittee on Health.

Note: a detailed summary of this legislation will appear in the next issue of the *Legislative Update*.

May 30 to June 3, 2011 - the House of Representatives and the Senate are not in session; possibly a good time to reach your congressional member in the home district.

Share your opinions with your Congressional Members!

If you are interested in Congressional actions, bills or wish to share your thoughts or concerns, find out how to contact your congressional representatives by visiting: <http://www.house.gov/> for the **House** or <http://www.senate.gov/> for the **Senate**.

NOTE: If you want information specific to a bill, go to the Thomas website <http://thomas.loc.gov/> and enter the bill number under *Search Bill Summary & Status*. Did you know? You can access the latest legislative activities and visit congressional schedules and calendars under *Current Activity* on the Thomas homepage.

Other News:

On Thursday, the Senate Special Committee on Aging held a hearing "**Meals, Rides, and Caregivers: What Makes the Older Americans Act so Vital to America's Seniors.**" Some of those speaking in support included Rosalyn Carter and Assistant Secretary Kathy Greenlee. A link to all hearing statements is provided at: http://www.aging.senate.gov/hearing_detail.cfm?id=333014&

Budget Reductions:

Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured May 2011 report projects the state-by-state impact of converting Medicaid into a block grant

and eliminating the planned expansion of the program by repealing the health reform law, as called for under the House Budget Plan. The analysis is available at:

<http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/8185.pdf>

Other News:

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced applications for a new caregiver program: "Caregivers for Veterans of all eras are eligible for respite care, education and training on what it means to be a caregiver, how to best meet the Veteran's care needs, and the importance of self-care when in a care giving role."

For more information:

<http://www.caregiver.va.gov/>

<http://www.caregiver.va.gov/docs/CaregiverFactSheet-AllEras.pdf>

May is Older Americans Month

To read the President's proclamation, go to:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/presidential-proclamation-older-americans-month>

*From the **National Institutes of Health** – May is Healthy Vision Month*

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/may2011/nei-12.htm>

From the Administration on Aging

May is Arthritis Awareness Month. To learn more, please visit the Arthritis Foundation website at <http://www.arthritis.org/>

INFORMATION & RESOURCES:

WHAT: 2011 Statewide Symposium in Support of Service Members, Veterans & Their Families

WHEN: June 7-8, 2011, Desert Willow Conference Center, 4340 E. Cotton Center Blvd., Phoenix, Arizona 85040

For more information:

<http://www.azgovernor.gov/gaca/Newsletter/ACMF2011SymposiumRegistrationPacket.pdf>

WHAT: 2011 Citizen Safety Forum and Expo

WHEN: June 11, 2011; 8 am to 1 pm, City of Grace Church, 655 E. University Drive, Mesa, Arizona

For more information:

<http://www.azgovernor.gov/gaca/Newsletter/CitizenSafetyForum7.pdf>

WHAT: SEACUS Free Elder Abuse Conference

WHEN: Wednesday, June 15, Manor House, 9 am – 3pm,

For more information:

<http://www.azgovernor.gov/gaca/Newsletter/XNLV1560.PDF>

WHAT: Arizona Senior Center Association Annual Conference, Resilience and Resurgence: Come for R & R

WHEN: Monday and Tuesday, July 18-19, 2011, Apache Gold Resort & Casino, San Carlos, AZ 85550

For more information:

<http://www.azgovernor.gov/gaca/Newsletter/SaveTheDateRegForm2011.pdf>

Buckeye Elder Resource Group – BERG now meets at the Town of Buckeye Senior Center, 201 E. Centre, Buckeye, Arizona.

For more information:

<http://www.azgovernor.gov/gaca/Newsletter/BERGFlyer.pdf>

From the **Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing**

Free Resource:

Hearing Aids and Personal Sound Amplifiers: Know the Difference

"Hearing Aids and Personal Sound Amplifiers: Know the Difference" is a two-page fact sheet from the Food and Drug Administration's consumer health information series. Download it free

at: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/UCM187224.pdf>

Just in case you're interested:

Back issues of the **Legislative Updates** are linked on the Council website at: <http://www.azgovernor.gov/qaca/LegUpdates.asp>

If you would like to submit an educational or public service event for consideration, you can do so by sending an email with the description to: gaca@az.gov. Please note: we try to include events of interest to older Arizonans and aging service advocates.

During this Memorial Day weekend, be sure to take time to remember and honor all the men and women who have served and are serving our country.

Enjoy & be safe!

~Governor's Advisory Council on Aging